

FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY

DRAWER 11

KENTUCKY (BY COUNTY + TOWN)

71.2009.085.05002

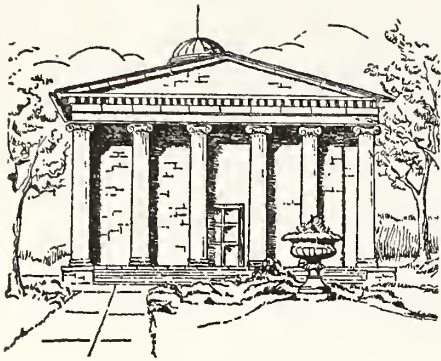


# Kentucky Counties & Towns

## Frankfort

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



OLD STATE HOUSE  
HOME OF THE SOCIETY

# KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ARCHIVES      MUSEUM      LIBRARY

Box 104

FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY

ack  
6/28/62

GOVERNOR BERT COMBS, *Chancellor*

JOHN B. BRECKINRIDGE, *President*

G. GLENN CLIFT, *Assistant Director  
and Editor*

RITA E. HART, *Comptroller*

FRANCES COLEMAN, *Librarian*

EUGENIA BLACKBURN, *Curator*

LAURA S. KENNEDY, *Coordinator  
Young Historians*

SHIRLEY HALL BROWN, *Membership  
Secretary*

GEORGE M. CHINN, *DIRECTOR*

June 22, 1962

Mr. R. Gerald McMurtry  
The Lincoln National Life Foundation  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Mr. McMurtry:

I was so glad to get your letter and hear that you are preparing to publish the list of historic sites etc. pertaining to Lincoln in "Lincoln Lore". I have gone through our files and museum displays and have come up with a few things that may interest you. In addition to the piece of the old cannon that was fired and exploded in Morgantown in 1840 when Lincoln delivered a campaign speech for William Henry Harrison we have

1. A Portrait of Lincoln by Charles Ince Williams
2. A portrait of Lincoln (artist



unknown) Lent by J. W. Townsend

3. a Bronze Plaque of Lincoln by Pickett
4. A piece of wood from the cabin in which A. Lincoln was born.
5. A piece of wood from the home of A. Lincoln given by Dr. Davis. (It doesn't say which home or where but I can find out from Dr Davis)
6. A piece of wood from a roof in Elizabethtown, Ky. under which A. Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln, married Sally Bush Johnston on Dec. 2, 1819. Given by the Hardie Co. Historical Society.

I wish that we had more. There are also some photograph and Currier & Ives prints. Do you remember the large bronze statue in the rotunda of the New Capitol?

Most sincerely,  
Eugenia Blackburn

## A presidential tale rarely told

BY BILL REED

June 3, 2008 - 12:33AM

Today marks Jefferson Davis' 200th birthday, and most people don't care.

That really irks his greatgreat-grandson, Bertram Hayes-Davis. The Colorado Springs banker has devoted himself to getting the only president of the Confederacy his proper due and contends that his ancestor is given short shrift in history books and in the American mind.

Hayes-Davis' personal quest started 30 years ago, when, as a young graduate student, he was named head of the Davis Family Association.

"That changed my life," he said. "It wasn't my choice, but it turned out to be something that has defined me. The name Davis carries a lot of weight."

Right now, his quest is an uphill battle.

While the bandwagon to celebrate Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday in 2009 is getting crowded already, his historical counterpart - Davis - is getting the cold shoulder. Hayes-Davis said he contacted 34 museums and agencies to elicit interest in Davis' birthday.

The number of responses he received: zero.

"Davis was an equal to Lincoln. He should be on the same platform," Hayes-Davis said. "Lincoln won (the Civil War), but was Lincoln any better than Davis? I'm not sure."

Most historians are sure.

"Lincoln was the successful commander in chief in a war that preserved the United States as one nation, indivisible, and that abolished the institution of slavery that had plagued the nation from its beginning and had made a mockery of its professions of freedom," said historian James M. McPherson of Princeton University, who won the Pulitzer Prize for "Battle Cry of Freedom." "Davis was the failed commander in chief in a war that sought to break up the United States and to preserve slavery. Who can maintain that he deserves equal billing with Lincoln?"

That perception makes it difficult to drum up interest in Davis' legacy, but Hayes-Davis isn't giving up. He'll speak today at one of a handful of events commemorating Davis' bicentennial: the reopening of the Beauvoir House in Biloxi, Miss., the site of Jefferson Davis' last home and presidential library. He's also hosting a family reunion this week at Rosemont Plantation, the Davis family home in Woodville, Miss., and will head south again this summer to appear at Davis-related functions in Kentucky and Alabama.

Davis remains revered or reviled enough that thousands of people claim a genealogical link to the Confederate president. Even Barack Obama wrote in his autobiography, "Dreams From My Father," that family rumors cited a distant link to Jefferson Davis.

But the only direct road to Jefferson Davis runs through Colorado Springs, where his descendants settled and have been a prominent family for 120 years.

"If you're not from Colorado Springs, you're not related," said Hayes-Davis. "We aren't Tutts and we aren't Penroses, but we are one of those big families that had a tremendous impact on Colorado

A presidential tale rarely told

Springs."

Jefferson Davis had six children, but only one married and had children. Margaret Howell Davis married Joel Addison Hayes, and the couple moved from Memphis to Colorado Springs in the 1880s, when the city was still young. Hayes founded the First National Bank of Colorado Springs and became one of the bankers for Penrose and Tutt, and the Hayes home on North Cascade Avenue was a hot spot for high-society functions.

To keep the Davis name alive, their son's name was legally changed to Jefferson Addison Hayes-Davis when the boy was 8.

More than a century later, Bertram Hayes-Davis feels his great-great-grandfather is still a misunderstood figure in American history.

Most people know him as the president of the Confederacy and the symbol of a failed rebellion. But he wants them to know Davis was also a Mexican War veteran, served in the House of Representatives and Senate, and was secretary of war under Franklin Pierce.

"For 53 years Davis was an American patriot, a West Point graduate and a renowned statesman," Hayes-Davis said. "He created the army that defeated him.

"There's more to this story than the one sentence in the history books."

Hayes-Davis understands that his cause doesn't make him the most popular guy. But he doesn't feel it's racist to promote the memory of a man whose legacy is, admittedly, entangled with slavery and strife.

The trick is to promote understanding of Davis without celebrating Davis, said William J. Cooper of Louisiana State University.

Cooper leads a group of historians in a movement to re-evaluate Davis without the passions of those who still admire him or those who want to tear down his statues. He wrote "Jefferson Davis, American" and his book of essays, "Jefferson Davis and the Civil War Era," will be published in the fall.

"Jefferson Davis fought to destroy the Union and to preserve slavery. Nobody today wants a hero who fought for slavery," Cooper said. "But the man merits understanding because of his enormous importance in the history of the nation."

Cooper said the longheld perception of Davis as a poor leader is beginning to shift - at least among a minority of scholars.

"The vast majority of historians see Davis as ineffective," he said. "But some now think he was - given the task he had and the circumstances he had to face - very successful, perhaps as successful as Lincoln would have been in the same situation. I think he was, overall, a very effective president."

Cooper has gotten to know Hayes-Davis through his long study of Jefferson Davis and is familiar with his longing to commemorate his ancestor. "And if Davis was my direct ancestor I might feel that way, too," Cooper said.

Yet, he urges caution when it comes to celebrating a man who defended slavery. Hayes-Davis agrees, but he wants to concentrate on Davis' accomplishments rather than his shortcomings.

Hayes-Davis wants people to recognize Davis as a strong and important leader, who led a formidable



resistance despite limited resources. He subscribes to the "Lost Cause" ideology of defending states' rights rather than slavery, per se. And above all, he doesn't want his ancestor to be just a villainous footnote in the story of Lincoln's heroism.

So his quest on behalf of Jefferson Davis goes on, naysayers be damned. And he's proud to mark Davis' 200th birthday.

"I'm never ashamed of what I am," he said.





June 6, 2008

## Many uneasy about Jefferson Davis' bicentennial bash

*By Chris Kenning**ckennin@courier-journal.com*

Both men were born in a log cabin in rural Kentucky 200 years ago. Both married Kentucky women. And both became politicians who led their people through a bloody civil war.

But while the nation has jumped on the Abraham Lincoln bicentennial bandwagon, kicked off by President Bush and celebrated from Washington to Illinois, people have been less enthusiastic about the 200th birthday of Kentucky's less-favored son — Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

Bertram Hayes-Davis, the Southern leader's great-great grandson, who has been leading the largely uphill charge for bicentennial recognition, says that despite a few events such as one today in Kentucky, Jefferson Davis is getting the cold shoulder from many museums and agencies around the country.

"Lincoln has kind of overwhelmed the whole thing," said Hayes-Davis, a 59-year-old Colorado banker, whose relative once disparagingly called Lincoln "His Majesty Abraham the First."

Kentucky state historian James Klotter said the lukewarm interest is understandable, given Davis' link to slavery.

"Davis has remained mired in controversy, in life and in death, because of the cause he was identified with and never repudiated," Klotter said. "And some people use him as a symbol for the 'Lost Cause' reborn."

Later this month, the Kentucky Historical Society will hold an academic symposium on Davis' "contested legacy," and today Hayes-Davis will kick off speeches, re-enacting and a Miss Confederacy beauty pageant at the state's official commemoration in Fairview, Ky., where a 351-foot concrete obelisk stands near the site of Davis' cabin birthplace.

## Davis historic site little known

The Jefferson Davis State Historic Site monument was conceived in reaction to the grander Lincoln memorial, said history professor Anne Marshall of Mississippi State University. But most of the 25,000 annual visitors stumble upon it by accident, according to park officials.

"Most don't have a clue it's here, or who Davis is," said Mark Doss, who has managed the site for Kentucky Parks for 23 years.

Kevin Hauntz, of Louisville, who will attend today's event as part of a Confederate artillery re-enactor group, says Davis gets a bad rap from people who only know he led the Confederacy.

"People want to judge figures from the Civil War against today's standards, and that's really inappropriate," he said. "If you would remove the Confederacy, he was a pretty exceptional individual."

For example, Davis was a West Point graduate who fought in the Mexican War, had a hand in building the Smithsonian Institution as a U.S. Senator and served as secretary of war under President

Franklin Pierce.

## Davis a lifelong supporter of slavery

But Raoul Cunningham, president of Louisville NAACP, who led an unsuccessful effort in 2003 to get Davis' statue removed from the Kentucky capital rotunda because he believed his connection to Kentucky was "thin," given his brief time here, said it's also unfair to gloss over his view on slavery.

"He was a proponent of slavery, so as an African American, I wouldn't go celebrate" his bicentennial, Cunningham said.

Davis was born in a log cabin on June 3, 1808, in Christian County, now Todd County -- only about 100 miles from where Lincoln was born eight months later. His family moved to Mississippi shortly after, but he returned to Kentucky to attend elementary school and later to attend Transylvania University in Lexington.

He married the daughter of Zachary Taylor in Louisville. When she died in 1835 after contracting malaria during a visit to Louisiana, he remarried in Mississippi, where he would go on to become a pro-slavery Congressman. He believed in Southern states' right to secede, but had argued it wasn't time. More controversially, he advocated the revival of the slave trade.

"He held slaves. Most studies indicate his plantation was one that treated slaves in a more positive light. But slavery was still slavery," Klotter said.

He was called to serve as the president of the Confederacy in 1861, despite preferring to be a military officer. Historians differ on whether he was a lackluster leader, or did the best he could against a foe with more industrial might.

After the war, Davis visited Kentucky, and he never disavowed the cause he fought for -- making him far more popular in the Bluegrass State than Lincoln for many decades.

"The Davis celebration has paled in comparison to Lincoln's, but that would not have been the case 100 years ago in Kentucky," Klotter said. "To that generation, Lincoln was the villain in the story."

## Davis' descendants snubbed by some

Today, Hayes-Davis' efforts for a proper bicentennial have paid off in some cases: There have been events in Woodville, Miss., and Montgomery, Ala.

Sixteen Davis descendants also attended the reopening of Beauvoir House, the antebellum mansion in Biloxi that Davis purchased in 1879 and renovated after being damaged in Hurricane Katrina.

But in many other cases, Hayes-Davis' requests have been met with indifference. He got no reply after writing to the Department of Defense, since Davis served as secretary of war, to see if it wanted to participate in an activity "to educate the public about the real Jefferson Davis."

Even in Mississippi, where Davis lived before and after the war, a bill to establish a commission to organize a 200th birthday celebration died in the Senate.

Kentucky set aside \$4 million for Lincoln commemorations, but barely any of that went to Davis events, beyond some funding for today's event in Fairview.

"He has been sort of an afterthought" despite sparking some interest among "historians and lost-causers," Marshall said.

William Cooper, a professor of history at Louisiana State University and author of "Jefferson Davis,

American," said people are conflicted about commemorating Davis because "he did lead the effort to break up the union, and an effort to perpetuate slavery. ... it's hard to even talk about him in some places."

After Robert E. Lee and other southern leaders died, "Davis became the visible symbol of the lost cause ideology: The way white Southerners viewed the Civil War and aftermath as the South fighting for state's rights in a noble, courageous war against an overpowering, cruel foe," Cooper said.

The key, he said, is trying to understand Davis and appreciate his role without celebrating him.

*Reporter Chris Kenning can be reached at (502) 582-4697.*

---

